

"I need your help to keep all these missions performing successfully. With your products, you're saving Soldiers' lives, improving their quality of life and improving their combat effectiveness. I'm proud to be part of an organization committed to helping the warfighter," he said.

MG John C. Doesburg, RDECOM CG, said Moran is up to the task that is more than enough for one person. "If you look at his past, he's proven he can do it," Doesburg said. "I couldn't have asked for a better PEO, and because of that, I'm confident in his ability as Senior Mission Commander and DCG for Operations. We're not sure how it's going to work, but he's going to get it right," he added.

Moran replaced COL David Bongi, who became the Installation Commander and Acting DCG for Operations in October 2003. Bongi has transitioned to his new position as DCG, SSC and Director for Homeland Security. For his last assignment, Bongi received the Meritorious Service Medal for what he achieved during his time in the position, according to Doesburg. The role of DCG for Operations was driven by the war on terrorism.

"This is the fourth time I've changed command, and it never gets easy," Bongi said. "You think about all the things you've accomplished and what you wanted to accomplish. You always go away thinking what you still would have liked to do."

Bongi said he's enjoyed his time at SSC so far and as a 23-year infantry veteran, appreciates the accomplishments of the workforce as a consumer of products developed there. "SSC does something for the Soldier every day, and when it comes to supporting the warfighter, SSC does that better than anyone," he concluded.

For more information about SSC, go to <http://www.natick.army.mil>.



## Worth Reading

### The Iraq War

John Keegan

Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, New York

*Reviewed by Geoffrey French, a Counterintelligence Analyst with General Dynamics and former Logistics Specialist for the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.*

With *Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)* more than a year old, books on many aspects of the military conflict and its political causes and ramifications are beginning to appear. The honor for the first pure military history to emerge goes to John Keegan with his simply titled *The Iraq War*. Keegan is a first-class historian, with many prestigious books to his credit already. These range from straightforward texts on topics such as World War II to his innovative take on Soldiers' experiences in famous conflicts, *The Face of Battle*.

For this reason, the expectations are high for Keegan's work. Even without much time to separate him from the events, he proves himself able to approach the topic in an objective and serious manner. His access to certain high-level sources, such as GEN Tommy Franks, former Commander, U.S. Central Command, ensures that he has enough detail on both the planning and the execution of the invasion to make the work insightful. The firsthand accounts from the embedded unit reporters also provide valuable coverage of ambushes, engagements and maneuvers.

To that extent, the history works. In others, however, it falls flat. Although there is some prestige in producing the first history, there appears to be a price. This book does not meet Keegan's past level of thorough research and polished language. First, the organization seems to suffer, with some repetition and the account of certain battles scattered throughout the three chapters that cover the fighting. Second, Keegan includes criticisms that seem to be both personal and out of place. His description of Franks, for example, includes a harsh aside about the "rigid processing of West Point" that encourages a "doctrinaire approach" and stifles free thinking. There are no footnotes to support or

explain his charge, which seems more likely to be found in a work by Stephen Ambrose than Keegan.

Finally, his historical research seems to have been lacking in certain parts of the book. In his section on the British military and, specifically, its experiences in Northern Ireland, he discusses the Irish Republican Army to the exclusion of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, which the army was originally inserted to face. This omission is not simply poor history, it is also uncharacteristic of other Keegan books.

However, purely as a source of information about *OIF*, the book does deliver. Its maps are useful and the text is clear. The narrative sheds light on the plans, missions, developments and surprises that Soldiers, Marines and pilots encountered.

For those interested in logistics and technology, there are particularly useful insights. The account of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force as it entered Nasiriyah — and the subsequent confusion and friendly fire — shows how much more progress the U.S. military still has to make in integrating its intelligence, technology and communications both in and between its services. The logistical difficulties the Army's 3rd Infantry Division faced demonstrate the continued importance of planning and the challenges of getting the proper supplies to the front, especially as the military moves toward the "focused logistics" articulated in *Joint Vision 2010* and *2020*. *The Iraq War* will be a practical volume for those interested in the conflict. Although (or perhaps because) it is the first, ultimately it will not be the definitive account of the events it describes.

## Contracting Community Highlights



In this issue, we shift our focus from the contracting endeavors so crucial to rebuilding Iraq to the long-standing support that the Army has provided to the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG). The feature article highlights the SANG Program and the support provided by U.S.

Army civilians in the Office of the Program Manager (OPM) SANG Modernization Program for more than 30

years. A diversified group of contracting personnel makes up OPM SANG's Acquisition Management Division (AMD) and executes the contracting responsibilities for this multibillion-dollar program. Although located on the other side of the world, AMD keeps abreast of the constantly evolving acquisition environment and regulations and coordinates directly with the Army Materiel Command's (AMC's) Office of Command Contracting. This feature article provides an insider's look at SANG and AMD, and provides valuable insight into how a remotely located contracting activity, such as AMD, maintains its vitality over the long term.

### Ms. Tina Ballard

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
of the Army  
(Policy & Procurement)

## Saudi Arabian National Guard Modernization Program

*Bill McKinley*

A 1973 agreement signed by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud and the U.S. government established the OPM-SANG Modernization Program's mission. The SANG's principle mission includes protection of oil fields, oil pipelines and holy Muslim sites as well as internal security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. SANG's primary weapon system is the Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) and V150 armored vehicle. To assist the SANG, OPM-SANG (the U.S. element) has provided training and support for some of these weapons and other security-related services to the SANG for more than 30 years.

OPM-SANG personnel are directly involved with all aspects of SANG's force expansion and in helping develop a total army. Through OPM-SANG, the United States provides technical and contract supervisory assistance with functions such as organization, training, equipment, procurement, construction, maintenance, supply, administration and medical programs. OPM-SANG priorities include forming LAV-equipped brigades and upgrading SANG artillery. Additionally, a wide range of advice and support is being provided to SANG Health Affairs. Supporting both the LAV and medical programs is a robust construction program that is jointly managed by OPM and SANG personnel. OPM-SANG personnel exercise principal authority over the